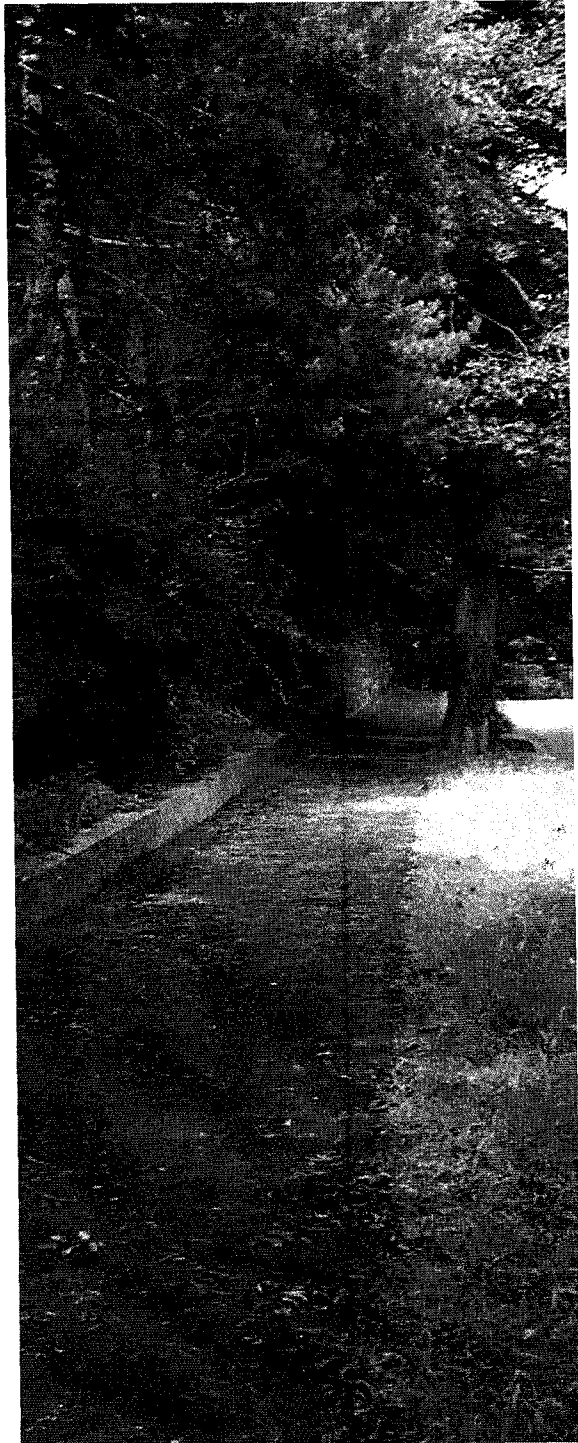


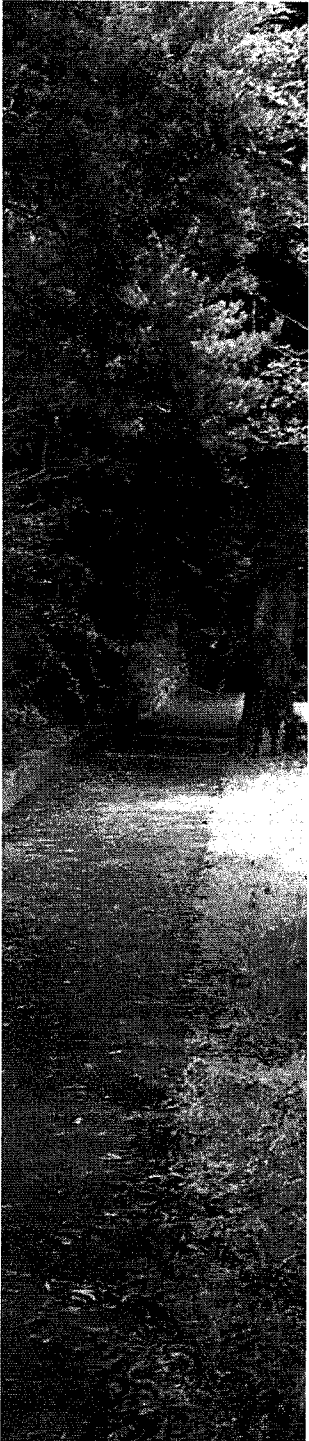
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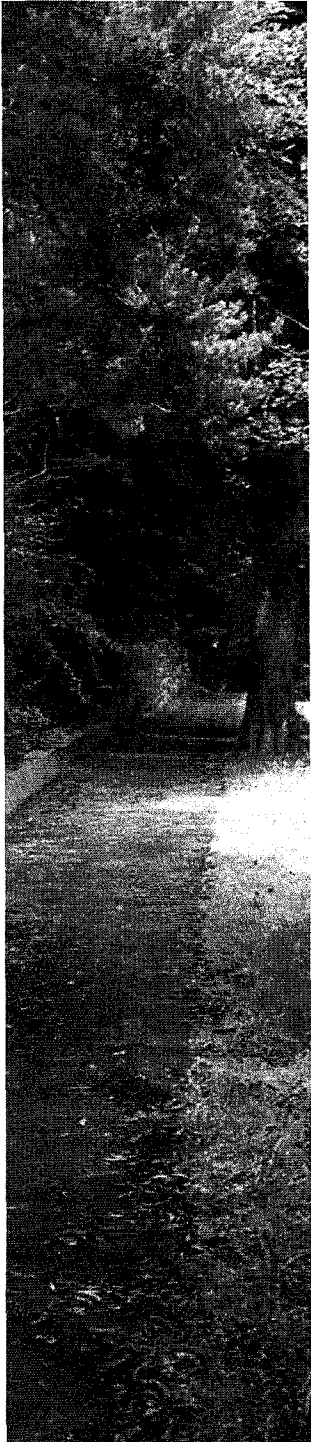
Sidewalk Committee Board of Selectman Oversight Meeting

September 21, 2009



Members

- Kate Chung (co-chair)
- Bettina Abe (co-chair)
- Sytske Campbell (secretary)
- Dick Calandrella
- Leslie Hogan
- Celia Kent
- Pam Cochrane
- Steve Evans
- Dana Snyder-Grant

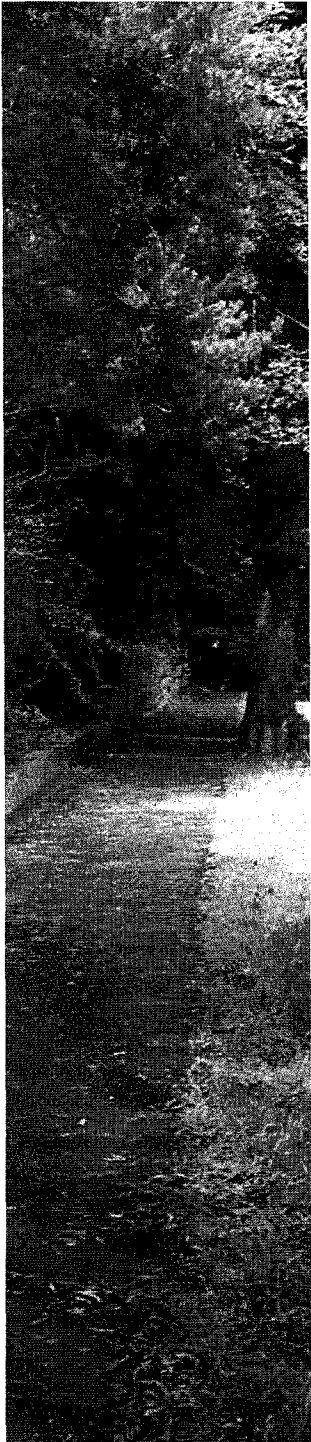


Charter

The Sidewalk Committee is an advisory committee reporting to the Board of Selectmen. Using criteria developed by the Committee in its first year, the Committee created and continues to maintain a priority list of sidewalk projects to be constructed in Acton.

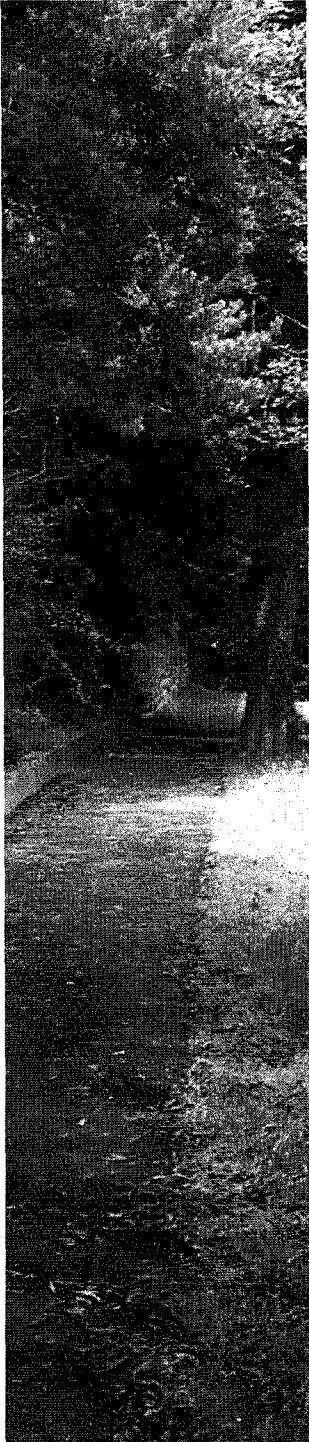
The Sidewalk Committee maintains the sidewalk priority list and the sidewalk design guidelines. The Committee works to facilitate the construction of projects on the priority list by addressing funding issues, providing feedback and advice to Town staff, and working with concerned citizens and other Town boards interested in sidewalk issues.

The Committee may review proposed development projects and provide input to the Planning Board or Board of Selectmen regarding sidewalks. The Committee may make recommendations to the Board of Selectmen on various sidewalk related policies.



History

- Formed in the summer of 2007
- Accomplishments in the first year included:
 - Developed “need” criteria for ranking sidewalk construction projects:
 - Road type
 - Walking room
 - Sight distances
 - Traffic speed
 - Connectivity
 - Prioritized list of sidewalk construction projects starting in Fiscal Year 2009 (July 1st, 2008)



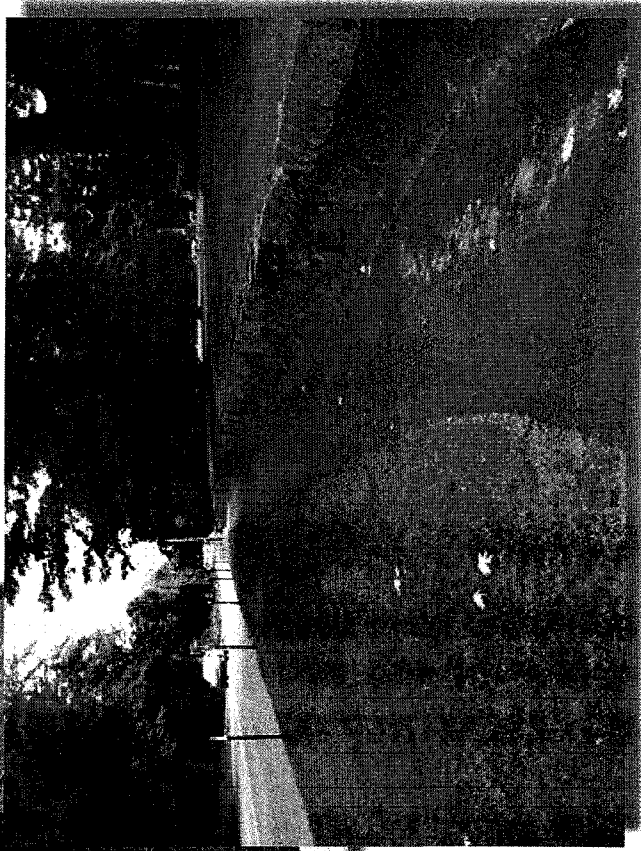
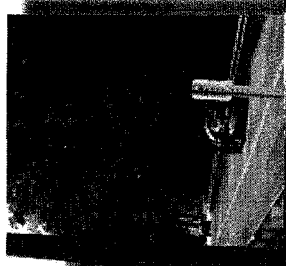
Priority Order Top-6

As recommended by Sidewalk Committee
and approved by Board of Selectmen.

1. Central Street (near Mt Hope Cemetery)
2. Lower Prospect
3. Route 2A (Davis Road to Main Street)
4. High Street (#30 - #46)
5. Main Street (Post Office Square to 2A)
6. High Street (#77 to Parker)

Progress

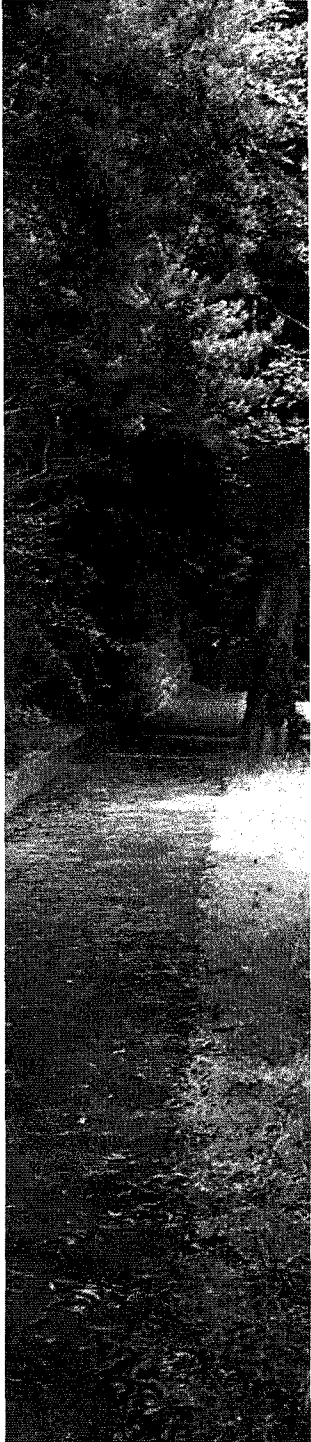
#1. Central Street



Progress

#2. Prospect Street – nearly finished





Progress

3. Great Road – Permission granted by State. Survey work needs to be done.
4. High Street (30-46) – Trees are being removed (Sept '09)
5. Main Street – Easements approved at town meeting. Design work done, trees should be removed before end of year
6. High Street (77 to Parker) – Proposals should be back for the survey work (Sept '09)



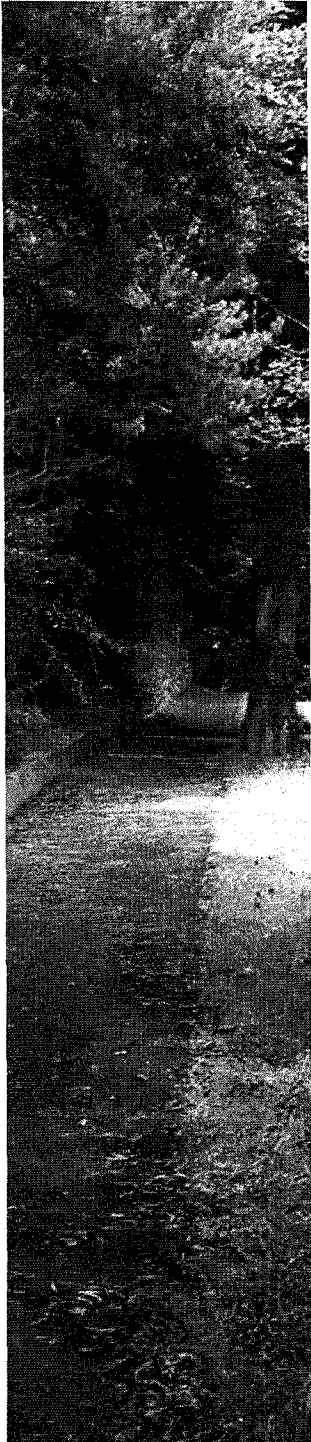
Secondary List of Streets

- Great Road (Acorn to Nonset by Nagog)
- Great Road (Main Street to Woodvale)
- Main Street (2A to Ledge Rock Way)
- Main Street (Ledge Rock Way to Robbins Brook)
- Martin Street (RR to Central)*
- Parker (High to Drummer)
- Piper Road
- River Street
- Summer (Central to Willow)
- Summer (by Ethan Allen)
- Taylor (plus small piece of Minot)
- Willow Street (Kingman to Central)*

As streets move off the Priority list they will be replaced by streets from this list.

The Sidewalk Committee is in the process of selecting the next three streets.

*Survey and Layout complete



Design Guidelines

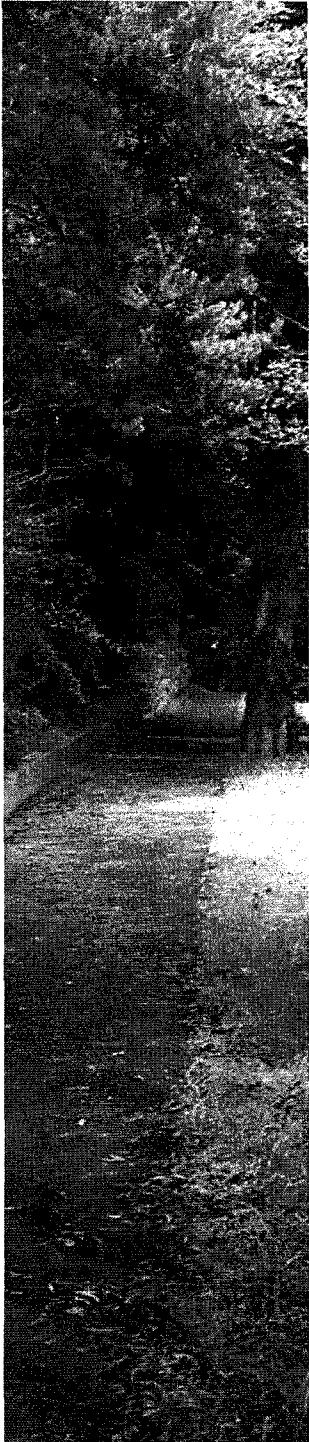
- How do we ensure that new sidewalks promote a pleasurable and safe walking experience for all populations?
- What materials and layout choices will contribute to Acton's look and feel, while using Town resources wisely?

We are working on a set of design guidelines that will address these issues. The handouts are a draft of these guidelines.

We intend to solicit comments/suggestions from other committees:

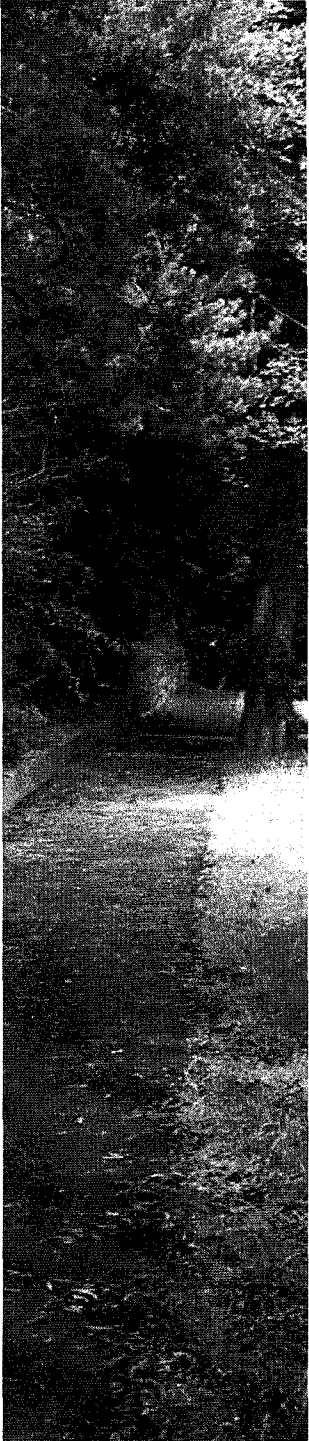
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|-----------------------|-------------------------------------|
| – Board of Selectmen | – Tree Warden |
| – CPC | – Town Departments |
| – Planning Board | – Commission on Disabilities |
| – Historic Commission | – Transportation Advisory Committee |
| – Design Review Board | |

We hope to have this complete by end of year.



The Issue With High Street

- #6 on our list of priorities.
- Narrow nature of road, lack of site lines due to curves, high embankments, densely populated, proximity to shops and trains.
- It's approximately a 0.8 mile stretch of road that needs a sidewalk. Estimated cost of \$788,833.
- High Street has the added complexity of having property owners own right up to the edge of the road.
- We have received approval from all 61 property owners (100%) on this stretch of High Street to survey their land.
- Giving permission to survey does not guarantee permission to build a sidewalk.



Potential Use of Eminent Domain?

Pros

- Ensuring a continuous stretch of sidewalk
- Avoiding the cost of and time spent negotiating individual designs and contracts with each of the owners
- Improving safety of the road

Cons

- Town has never used eminent domain to build a sidewalk
- Eminent domain can be hostile
- Eminent domain can be expensive
- Eminent domain can cause a negative perception of future sidewalk projects

A vertical black and white photograph showing a path or sidewalk lined with trees, receding into the distance. The path is illuminated by sunlight filtering through the trees.

High Street Strategies

The survey work alone is estimated to cost \$21 – 44K. It is such a big job it is being outsourced. Before the money is spent, the BoS needs to decide what its strategy should be:

1. Negotiate with individuals, accept easements where possible, and use eminent domain for those who refuse.
2. Use eminent domain for entire stretch, pay all owners for their property needed for sidewalk construction.
3. Negotiate with individuals, accept easements where possible, and wait for turn-over and further negotiation opportunities for the rest of the properties.
4. Abandon sidewalk project for this part of High Street at this time.



Questions or Comments ?